Mary Roy

Mary 1815

Sacrificium Laudis,

OR

A Thank-Offering.

Being a

DISCOURSE

UPON

PSALM XXX. 3, 4.

Occasioned by the Author's Recovery, from a dangerous Sickness.

By THOMAS STEWARD, Minister of the Gospel.

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To his much eſtemed Friends, the Inhabitants of *DEBENHAM*, and the Towns adjacent, who attend the Author's Miniſtry.

Beloved Chriſtians,

THAT *merciful Providence which gave occaſion to the Compoſing and Delivering the following Diſcourſe none of you can be ſuppoſed ignorant of. It is not unknown to you what a ſevere and contagious Diſeaſe I have lately Laboured under, you are not unacquainted with the terrible and threatning Symptoms, the raging and furious Violence with which the cruel Diſtemper was attended and aggravated, a Diſtemper which by reaſon of the painful and troubleſome Senſations it produces in the Bodies of* Mortals, *together with the dread and terror it brings into* Towns *and* Families *has obtained the Appellation of* THE TROUBLE *among the* Vulgar, *and is more frequently (in ſome Places) expreſs'd by that* Term *or* Phraſe *then by it's proper* Name. *From this Sore Diſeaſe Almighty God has been pleaſed to reſtore and recover Me, even beyond the Expectations of all my Friends that were acquainted with the dangerous Circumſtances of my Caſe, and*

of all that lent me their kind Aſſiſtance in the Day of my Diſtreſs. Having received ſuch an eminent Deliverance from the powerful and merciful Hand of God, I Compoſed this Diſcourſe as a Teſtimony *of my* Thankfulneſs *to him, the bleſſed Author of it, and of the Senſe which I have, or (I am ſure) ought to have of my great Engagements and Obligations to him, and alſo that I might hereby excite you to join with and aſſiſt me in the Celebration of the Divine Praiſe for a Favour which I have great Reaſon to look upon as an Anſwer of your Prayers, and the Prayers of my* Brethren *and* Chriſtian Friends *in other Places.*

As to the Publication *of this* Diſcourſe *it is that which many of you have earneſtly deſired, upon which Account I may with the more Boldneſs expect your kind Acceptance of it. I am, and cannot but be very ſenſible that it has many Defects, which Critical Eyes will eaſily diſcover in it, yet ſeeing you have conceived ſo favourable an Opinion of it (which I muſt look upon as very much owing to your Affection unto its Author) notwithſtanding its Weakneſs and Plainneſs, without any further Apologizing for its Imperfections, I put it into your* Hands, *and do here offer to your* Eye *that which not long ſince ſounded (and it ſeems not altogether unpleaſantly) in your* Ears, *begging that the* Divine Spirit *may accompany it with a mighty Power to your* Hearts *and make it ſome way profitable in the*

Read-

Reading, *as I hope it has been in the* Hearing. *I have made very few Alterations or Enlargements, but have* Printed *it almoſt* Verbatim *as it was* Preach'd, *which yet (I hope) will not render it the leſs Acceptable.*

I ſhall not enlarge further in this Epiſtolary Preface *leaſt I ſhould ſeem to make the* Porch *too big for the* Houſe, *but committing this* plain *Diſcourſe to* God's Bleſſing, *and to your* Candour, *I conclude, and Subſcribe my ſelf,*

Febr. 8th. 1699. Your very Affectionate, tho'

unworthy Servant in the Goſpel

Thomas Steward.

ERRATA.

ERRATA.

PAge 2. read מומור p. 3. l. 9. r. *Palace:* p. 10. l. 3. add *ſo:* p. 13. l. 5. r. *Miracle:* p. 18. l. 33. r. *Reaſons:* p. 24. l. 17. r. *bear:* A few Miſpointings 'tis hop'd the Reader's Candor will pardon.

PSALM

PSALM XXX. 3, 4.

Text.

O Lord thou haſt brought up my Soul from the Grave; thou haſt kept me alive, that I ſhould not go down to the Pit. Verſ. 3.

Sing unto the Lord, O ye Saints of his, and give Thanks at the remembrance of his Holineſs. Verſ. 4.

THrough the infinite Goodneſs of God (Brethren, beloved in our Lord) I your poor unworthy Miniſter and Servant for Jeſus ſake, do ſtand here among you this Day. I am come hither in the multitude of the Lord's Mercies, to celebrate the Praiſes of the great Jehovah; and once more to ſpeak to you in his Name. The Almighty *preſerver of Men*, has been pleaſed to reſtore and recover me from a ſore and dangerous Diſtemper, a Diſtemper that has proved Mortal to many, and was like to do ſo to me, *for* (to ſpeak in the Words of the Apoſtle, concerning *Epaphroditus*) *indeed I was very Sick, nigh unto Death, but God had Mercy on Me:* The God *that heareth Prayer*, did both Hear and graciouſly Anſwer thoſe earneſt and united Requeſts, which you offered to him on my behalf, when I was not in a capacity of Praying for my ſelf. He *ſpake the Word and I was Healed.* He who has Life and Death at his diſpoſe, *in whoſe Hand our Breath is*, has raiſed me out of a weak and low Condition, even beyond your Hopes and Expectations, and very much beyond my Deſert. Behold in me an inſtance of God's powerful Mercy, behold a Man brought up from the Gates of the

Introduction.

Phil. 2. 27.

Grave, ſnatch'd out of the very Jaws of Death; which (as I may ſay) even gaped upon me, and ſtood ready to ſeize and devour me as it's lawful Prey; Behold me, Brethren, as a living Monument of the Power and Prevalency, the force and efficacy of fervent Prayer. *David* ſaith with reſpect to himſelf, in the Verſe before the Text; *O Lord my God, I cried unto thee, and thou haſt Healed me.* You may ſay with reſpect to me, and to your ſelves, O Lord, our God, we cried unto thee for our Paſtor's Life, and thou haſt healed him; and I for my own part have reaſon to ſay unto God with a thankful Heart [*O Lord thou haſt brought up my Soul from the Grave, thou haſt kept me alive that I ſhould not go down to the Pit*] and to you let me ſay with the Pſalmiſt in the latter part of my Text [*Sing unto the Lord, O ye Saints of his, and give thanks at the remembrance of his Holyneſs and Goodneſs*] Thus much ſhall ſuffice to have ſpoken by way of Preface or Introduction. Come we now to the Conſideration firſt of the *Pſalm* in general, next of the *Context*, then of the *Text* its ſelf. This Pſalm where my Text lies is entitled, *A Pſalm and Song at the Dedication of the Houſe of* David: Interpreters are of different Opinions concerning the meaning of this Inſcription; The moſt probable conjectures that I have met with concerning it, are two; the firſt of which is this, that theſe Words [מִזְמוֹר שִׁיר חֲנֻכַּת הַבַּיִת לְדָוִד] which we tranſlate [*A Pſalm and Song at the Dedication of the Houſe of* David] do not at all ſignifie or denote the Matter or Occaſion of this *Pſalm*, but only the Name of the *Hebrew Tune* according to which this Holy Song was to be ſung, which was the ſame that *David* uſed at the Dedication of his Houſe: So the Meaning is no more then this, that this Pſalm was to be ſung to the tune of the Pſalm or Song of the Dedication. The Second, and, to me, the more likely Opinion, is, that this Pſalm is thus entitled to denote the time when it was ſung

Title of the Pſalm.

Vide Pool. Ann. in loc.

ſung, *viz.* at the Dedication of the Houſe of *David*, which was (as I may ſay) a Spiritual Houſe-warming. When the Jews firſt entred a New Houſe, they were wont to praiſe God in a ſolemn manner, with Pſalms or ſpiritual Hymns ſuitable to the Occaſion, and to uſe ſuch other Rites and Ceremonies as the Nature of ſuch a Buſineſs required; Now it ſeems by the Title of this Pſalm that it was ſung at the Dedication of that Houſe or Place which *David* built after God had eſtabliſhed him in his Kingdom; and it appears by the Matter of the Pſalm that *David* had been delivered about this time from ſome eminent Diſtreſs, and particularly, from ſome very dangerous and death-threatning Diſeaſe, for which he does here give Thanks to God his Deliverer, taking the Advantage of ſuch a Publick and Solemn Occaſion to make his grateful acknowledgments and returns of Praiſe unto that glorious God, to whom *do belong the Iſſues from Death.* Thus much for the Title. 2 *Sam.* 5. 11. *Pſa* 68 20.

In this Pſalm *David* (1) praiſeth God for his late deliverance from imminent danger of Death, Verſ. 1, 2, 3. *I will extol thee O Lord, for thou haſt lifted me up, and haſt not made my foes to rejoyce over me. O Lord my God, I cried unto thee, and thou haſt healed me. O Lord, thou haſt brought up my Soul from the Grave, thou haſt kept me alive that I ſhould not go down to the Pit.* (2) He exhorteth others alſo to joyn with him in the Celebration of the Lord's Praiſes, or in giving Thanks to God for his great Mercies, Verſ. 4, 5. *Sing unto the Lord, O ye Saints of his, and give thanks at the remembrance of his Holyneſs. For his Anger endureth but a Moment; in his favour is Life: Weeping may endure for a Night, but Joy cometh in the Morning.* (3) He confeſſeth his too carnal Security, during the continuance of his proſperous State, and how he was corrected for it Verſ. 6, 7. *In my Proſperity I ſaid, I ſhall never be moved. Lord, by thy Favour thou haſt made my Mountain to ſtand ſtrong; thou didſt hide*

Parts of the Pſalm.

(1) *Verſ.* 1. *Verſ.* 2. *Verſ.* 3.

(2) *Verſ.* 4. *Verſ.* 5.

(3) *Verſ.* 6, 7.

(4) *thy face and I was troubled.* (4) He sheweth how he prayed and cried to God for Mercy in his Affliction, *ver.* 8, 9, 10. *I cried unto thee, O Lord, and unto the Lord I made Supplication. What profit is there in my Blood? Shall the dust praise thee, shall it declare thy Truth? Hear, O Lord, and have mercy upon me: Lord, be thou my helper.* (5) He concludes with praising God for giving a gracious Answer to his Prayers, *ver.* 11, 12. *Thou hast turned for me my Mourning into Dancing; thou hast put off my Sackcloth, and girded me with gladness: To the end that my glory may sing praise to thee, and not be silent: O Lord, my God, I will give thanks unto thee for ever.* Thus much for the Division of the *Psalm* into its parts: I will now hasten to the Consideration of the *Text*, first glancing a little upon the preceding *Context*. The *Psalm* begins with the Voice of Joy and Praise, *ver.* 1. *I will extol thee, O Lord, for thou hast lifted me up, and hast not made my foes to rejoyce over me.* As if he had said, " O Lord my God, unto thy powerful and merciful Providence I ascribe " my late wonderful Preservations and Deliverances: " Thou hast lifted me up out of the deep Pit of Affliction, I will therefore endeavour (according to the utmost of my Ability and Capacity) to lift up the Glory of thy Name, in and by my Thanksgivings. I " will render to thee the highest Praise, and will never cease to magnify thy Name, who hast drawn me " up out of that Gulph of Misery into which I was " plunged, and delivered me from those extreme Pains " and Dangers with which I was even overwhelmed. " I sat (as it were) in a deep and darksom Dungeon, " but thou hast brought me out into the Light, and " filled me with that Joy which my Enemies hoped to " have had in my Destruction. My cruel inhumane " Adversaries expected an occasion and opportunity of " Triumph and Insultation over me, but thou hast defeated and frustrated their Barbarous hopes and Ex-

" pectations

Vers. 8.
Vers. 9.
Vers. 10.
(5)
Vers. 11.
Vers. 12.
Context paraphrased, Vers. 1.

" pectations by giving me a wonderful and ſeaſonable " Deliverance. In the next *ver.* the *Pſalmiſt* ſhews by what means he obtained this even miraculous Deliverance, this great Salvation for which he here praiſes God; it was by the means of fervent Prayer and Supplication. *O Lord, my God, I cried unto thee, and thou haſt healed me.* As if he had ſaid; " O Lord my moſt " gracious God, I was in a forlorn and languiſhing Con- " dition, wherein I was not able to help my ſelf, and " out of which no Creature could deliver me; but in " this State and Danger, when I ſeemed to be a loſt " Man, I made my humble and earneſt Addreſſes unto " thee; I cried and prayed unto thee who art a God " hearing Prayer, and begged that thou wouldſt deli- " ver me from that grievous Infirmity I laboured un- " der, and from that eminent Danger of Death that I " was in; and indeed I did not Pray and Cry in vain, " thou didſt graciouſly hear and ſpeedily anſwer, and " haſt mercifully delivered me from the fears and trou- " bles of my Mind, and from the pains and diſtempers " of my Body. Next fall in the Words of the *Text*, [*O Lord, thou haſt brought up my Soul from the Grave; thou haſt kept me alive that I ſhould not go down to the Pit. Sing unto the Lord O ye Saints of his, and give thanks at the remembrance of his Holineſs:*] *O Lord, thou haſt brought up my Soul from the Grave*, q. d. " I am like a Man riſen " from the Dead, I was upon the brink of the Pit, juſt " ready to drop in, Death opened its voracious Mouth " and was about to devour me, but thou didſt ſnatch " me out of its very Jaws: [*Thou haſt brought up my Soul*] i. e. thou haſt brought up me, for the Soul is oft put for the Perſon in *Scripture*. The Soul in a ſtrict and proper Senſe never goes down to the Grave, for Immortality is the Property and Priviledge of its Spiritual uncompounded Nature; we muſt therefore by the Soul here underſtand the Perſon conſiſting of Soul and Body:

Verſ. 2. *Paraphraſe.*

Text.

Verſ. 3.

When

when theſe two conſtituent Parts of Man come to be
Eccl. 12. 7. ſeparated from each other, the Body *returns to the Earth out of which it was taken*, and the Soul *unto God that gave it*, to receive a Sentence deciſive or determinative of it's eternal State: Now when God does by his powerful Providence prevent this Separation when it is threatned by dangerous Diſeaſes, he may be ſaid to bring up our Souls from the Grave, into which the Body (that is moſt intimately united to the Soul ſo long as Life continues) was about to fall. What *David* meant when he ſaid, [*O Lord, thou haſt brought up my Soul from the Grave*] is ſufficiently evident from the following Words [*thou haſt kept me alive that I ſhould not go down to the Pit*] which latter Clauſe is of the ſame import with, and exegetical of the former. The *Pſalmiſt* having returned Thanks to God himſelf for the Deliverance which he had graciouſly vouchſafed to him, he does in the next Place exhort others to join with him in this Work of bleſſing
Pſ. 4. and praiſing God, *ver.* 4. [*Sing unto the Lord, O ye Saints of his, and give thanks at the remembrance of his Holineſs.*] *David* here calls to the People and Servants of God to help and aſſiſt him in the Celebration of the Divine Goodneſs. Without queſtion the Godly had helped him with their Prayers, and now he deſires that they would help him with their Praiſes alſo. *Sing unto the Lord, O ye Saints of his*; ye that fear and love the Lord, and walk before him in Holineſs and Righteouſneſs, come and join your Songs and Allelujahs unto mine, ſing to the Honour of the Lord, adore his Greatneſs, and praiſe his Mercy, knowing and conſidering that the ſame Kindneſs which he ſhewed to me, he is ready to extend alſo unto you when you ſeek unto him by fervent Prayer, as I did; He will make your Extremity his Opportunity, as he did mine; do ye therefore celebrate and magnify his Name, and [*give thanks at the remembrance of his Holineſs*] or, *at the mention of his Holineſs*, as the Original Words

Words לְזֵכֶר קָדְשׁוֹ may be rendred, *i. e.* when you call to mind, or when others Celebrate the Holineſs of God's Nature, which he demonſtrates by his Works, by his Faithfulneſs, Care and Kindneſs towards his Holy ones (as an excellent Expoſitor gloſſeth upon the Place) Thus I have briefly explained theſe Words [*O Lord, thou haſt brought up my Soul from the Grave; thou haſt kept me alive, that I ſhould not go down to the Pit. Sing unto the Lord, O ye Saints of his, and give thanks at the remembrance of his Holineſs.* The Senſe of which you may take together in this brief paraphraſtical Comment. *q. d.* "O my God, thy Mercy towards me is wonderful beyond "all Expreſſion, for thou haſt recovered me out of a "deſperate Diſeaſe, and delivered me from a deadly "Danger, when there ſeemed to be no more hope of "my Reſtauration, then of the Reſurrection of a dead "Man before the laſt Day, or of a Sick Man's Recove-"ry that is juſt at the point of Death, and even now "yeilding up the Ghoſt. Join with me now, all ye that "are ſenſible of the Divine Benefits, in this Duty of "Praiſe and Thankſgiving to him who hath called me "from Death unto Life again: Bleſs the Lord, together "with me, for my ſingle Praiſes and Thankſgivings are "not ſufficient: Gratefully Commemorate his Power, "and Goodneſs, and Wiſdom, and Faithfulneſs which "he hath ſhewn in my Reſtitution, wherein you may "ſee his Clemency towards his faithful Servants, whom "he may indeed Correct very ſharply for a little time, "but is ſoon reconciled, and appeaſed, or pacified to-"wards them, and ſends them Deliverance ſo unexpe-"ctedly, ſo ſuddenly as well as ſeaſonably, that where "nothing but Lamentations were heard over Night, "there nothing but Shouts of Joy are heard in the "Morning; for (as it is in the Verſe following the Text) *his Anger endureth but a moment; in his favour is life: Weeping may endure for a Night, but Joy cometh in the Morning.*

Mr. Pool. Engliſh Annot.

Text Paraphraſed.

See Dr. Patrick Paraph. in loc.

Morning. So much for Explication. There are ſeveral uſeful Obſervations which I ſhall commend to you from the Words conſidered with Relation to the whole *Context*.

Deut. 18. (1) We may obſerve, *That the Saints and Servants of God are liable to great Troubles and Afflictions as well as others*: Diſeaſes and Death ſeize upon their Bodies, as well as upon the Bodies of the vileſt among Men. *David* was a Righteous Man, *a Man after God's own Heart*, a Man in whom there was much of the Grace and Spirit of God, and yet he was oft-times Afflicted, and that deeply too: He had been in ſome great Diſtreſs a little before he Compoſed this *Pſalm* of Praiſe, his Soul was brought down to the Grave, and he was ready to drop into the Pit; elſe why does he ſay, *O Lord, thou haſt brought up my Soul from the grave, thou haſt kept me alive*, &c. Yea, after this he died and *ſaw Corruption*: The beſt and moſt upright among Men muſt not expect an Exemption from Pains and Sorrows, Diſeaſes and Infirmities, the Harbingers and Forerunners of approaching Death. What an honourable Teſtimony does God give of his Servant *Job! There is none like him in the Earth, a perfect and an upright Man*, &c. and yet who more Afflicted then this upright Man? He was Poor to a *Proverb*, Miſerable to a *Prodigy*: Hear his doleful Complaints. *Oh* (ſaid he) *that my grief were throughly weighed, and my calamity laid in the balances together. For now it would be heavier then the ſand of the ſea, therefore my words are ſwallowed up. The arrows of the Almighty are within me, the poyſon whereof drinketh up my ſpirit*, &c. *The things that my ſoul refuſed to touch are as my ſorrowful meat*. In the next Chapter he cries out; *I am made to poſſeſs months of vanity, and wearieſom nights are appointed to me. When I lie down, I ſay, when ſhall I ariſe, and the night be gone? and I am full of toſſings to and fro unto the dawning of the day. My fleſh is cloathed with worms and clods of duſt. My skin is broken and become loathſom*. So heavy

1 Sam 13. 14.

Act. 13. 36.

Job 1. 8

Job 6. 2, 3, 4.

Pſal. 7.

Job 7. 3, 4, 5.

was

was the Burden of this good Man's Affliction, ſo violent were his Pains and Paroxyſms that they extorted from him thoſe bitter Words [*My Soul is weary of my life.*] Many other Expreſſions he uttered in the anguiſh and bitterneſs of his Spirit, though he was a Mirrour and Miracle of Patience: The Afflictions of *David* were alſo many and great, and forced from him very grievous and doleful Complaints. *O Lord* (ſays he) *rebuke me not in thy wrath. Thine arrows ſtick faſt in me, and thy hand preſſeth me ſore. There is no ſoundneſs in my fleſh becauſe of thine anger, neither is there any reſt in my bones, becauſe of my Sin. My wounds ſtink and are corrupt becauſe of my fooliſhneſs. I am troubled, I am bowed down greatly, I go mourning all the day long. My loins are filled with a loathſom diſeaſe, and there is no ſoundneſs in my fleſh. I am feeble and ſore broken, I have roared by reaſon of the diſquietneſs of my heart. My heart panteth, my ſtrength faileth me, as for the light of mine eyes it alſo is gone from me. My lovers and my friends ſtand aloof from my ſore, and my kinſmen ſtand afar off:* So *Hezekiah*, he was one of the beſt of all the Kings of *Judah*, and yet he was greatly Afflicted with a peſtilential Diſeaſe, or with the Plague it ſelf (as ſeveral good Interpreters think.) Hear himſelf declaring the ſad Condition he was in, in that *writing* or Song of Thankſgiving which he Compoſed after his Recovery. *I ſaid in the cutting off of my days, I ſhall go to the gates of the grave.* q.d. I concluded that I ſhould die, I had given up all my Hopes of Life. *I am deprived of the reſidue of my years.* i.e. which according to the Courſe of Nature I might have lived. *I ſaid, I ſhall not ſee the Lord, even the Lord in the land of the living; I ſhall behold man no more with the inhabitants of the world.* q. d. I ſhall have no more Communion with God in his Ordinances here on Earth, I ſhall have no more Society with Men in this World: *Mine age is departed,* &c. *he* (viz. God) *will cut me off with pining ſickneſs, from day even to night*

Chap. 10. 1.

See Chap. 16. 12, 13, 14, 15, 16. *and in other places.*

Pſal. 38. 1, 2, 3.

Verſ. 5.

Verſ. 6.

Verſ. 7.

Verſ. 8.

Verſ. 10.

Verſ. 11.

Iſa. 38. 10.

Verſ. 11.

Verſ. 12.

Verſ. 13. *wilt thou make an end of me. I reckoned till morning that as a Lion will he break all my bones*, &c. *Like a Crane, or a Swallow did I chatter, I did mourn as a Dove.* My Friends, the beſt Saints of God in this World are imperfect, there is much Corruption ſtill remaining in them, they have many *ſinful infirmities*, and therefore 'tis no wonder that they have *bodily infirmities*. When we conſider how often we offend God, and *grieve his Holy Spirit* by our Tranſgreſſions and Violations of his Righteous Law, inſtead of wondring that we are ſo often ill, we ſhall ſee Cauſe rather to wonder that we are ever well; that the Lord ſhould take ſo much care of us, who are ſo careleſs of his Precepts, that he ſhould ſo Mercifully remember us, who do ſo ungratefully forget him, and neglect our Duty to him. The Diſcipline of the Rod is neceſſary to make us ſenſible of our Miſcarriages: See how Job 36. 8, 9, 10. *Elihu* ſpeaks concerning the Righteous themſelves: *If they be bound in Fetters, and be holden in the Cords of Affliction: Then he ſheweth them their Work, and their Tranſgreſſions that they have exceeded. He openeth alſo their Ear to Diſcipline, and commandeth that they return from iniquity.* When God's *Children* prove undutiful to their *heavenly Father*, 'tis meet that they ſhould ſmart for it, and feel his *paternal Caſtigations*. *Afflictions* are neceſſary upon many Accounts, yea and *Death* its ſelf is neceſſary to make a full end of Sin and Sorrow. The *body of ſin* will not be fully deſtroyed, till we put off this *body of fleſh*. Sin cleaves to our Natures like Ivy to the Wall, and will not all out till this Earthly Tabernacle be pulled down, and then Sin ſhall be utterly eradicated, extirpated, or pulled up by the very Roots. Much uſe might be made of this Obſervation, but I cannot ſtay upon it at this Time. I paſs to a Second,

Doct. 2d, (2) We may obſerve, *That the beſt Courſe a Child of God can take in Affliction, the moſt likely way to obtain Deliverance, is to pray and cry to God.* I gather this from the

the *Text*, conſidered together with the *Context*. The *Pſalmiſt* ſaith in the Verſe before the *Text*, *O Lord, my God, I cried unto thee, and thou haſt healed me*; and then it follows, *O Lord, thou haſt brought up my Soul from the Grave*, &c. His Deliverance was a return of Prayer. You can do nothing better in Affliction then to Pray, ſo far as you are able, and to engage others to Pray with you, and for you. This is the *Apoſtle*'s advice and counſel. *Is any among you Afflicted? let him pray: Is any Sick among you? let him call for the Elders of the Church, and let them pray over him. And the prayer of faith ſhall ſave the Sick, and the Lord ſhall raiſe him up, and if he have committed Sins they ſhall be forgiven him.* James 5. 13, 14, 15. It was *David*'s conſtant Practice to have recourſe to God in his Afflictions that the ſame Hand that laid them on might take them off, and he found the happy Succeſs of it, and frequently declares his Experience concerning it. *I ſought the Lord* (ſaith he) *and he hear'd me, and delivered me from all my fears.* Pſal. 34. The like Expreſſions we find in ſeveral other Places which I need not mention. We muſt not deſpond in our Troubles, and give way to a kind of ſullen Deſpair, as if there were *no help for us in God*, but we muſt cry to him with hope and expectation of Relief.

(3) We may obſerve; *That when the People and Servants of God are recovered and delivered out of dangerous and death-threatning Diſtempers and Afflictions, it is both their duty and their cuſtom to celebrate the Praiſes of God, and to give thanks unto his holy Name for ſo great a Mercy.* Doct. 3d. This Point I gather and infer from the *Text* conſidered as it hath reſpect and relation to the whole *Pſalm*, which (as you have heard) is Euchariſtical, or a Pſalm of Praiſe wherein *David* gives thanks to God for his Deliverance out of ſome very dangerous Affliction. *I will extol thee, O Lord, for thou haſt lifted me up* (ſays he in *Pſal.* 30. 1.) and in the Text, [*O Lord, thou haſt brought up my Soul*

from the Grave, thou haſt kept me alive that I ſhould not go down to the Pit.] And he concludes the Pſalm with Praiſe and Thankſgiving. *Thou haſt turned for me my Mourning into Dancing*, &c. *O Lord my God, I will give thanks unto thee for ever:* This Obſervation being very ſuitable to the preſent Occaſion, I ſhall a little enlarge upon it in giving you ſeveral Reaſons why the People of God do and ſhould Praiſe him when they are recovered and delivered from dangerous Diſtempers.

Pſal. 30. 11, 12.

Reaſon 1ſt. (1.) *God is the Author of the Deliverance, and therefore there is the higheſt Reaſon that he ſhould have the praiſe of it.* As it is God that lays on Afflictions, ſo 'tis God that takes them off; he brings them, and he removes them; when they come he gives them a Commiſſion, and when the Date of their Commiſſion is expired (if I may ſo ſpeak) then they depart, and go from us again. *David* in the Text aſcribes his Deliverance wholly unto God, as the Author, and efficient Cauſe thereof; *O Lord* (ſays he) *thou haſt brought up my Soul from the grave, thou haſt kept me alive*, &c. God is the great and beſt Phyſician both of Soul and Body: Other Phyſicians would be of no value, if he did not give his bleſſing to the means they uſe: Death and Life are in the power of his hand. Hear how himſelf ſpeaks. *I even I am he, and there is no God with me: I kill and I make alive; I wound, and I heal*: 'Tis God that heals the ſin-ſick Soul; 'tis God alſo that cures and reſtores the diſeaſed Body. Troubles and Afflictions come and go at his call and command. *Speak the word only, and my Servant ſhall be healed*, ſaid the believing *Centurion* to our bleſſed *Saviour*, who was God manifeſt in the Fleſh. Second Cauſes have indeed their agency and effect, in the healing of Diſeaſes, but tis under the influence of the firſt Cauſe, *viz.* God, who is the principal Healer. *He that is our God, is the God of Salvation, and unto God the Lord belong the Iſſues from Death.* The out-lets from the Grave, or Deliverances from the moſt deadly

Deut. 32. 39.

Mat. 8. 8.

Pſal. 68. 20.

deadly Dangers, they belong to God as the Author, they are owing to him as the Principal efficient Cauſe. Have we had a *Sentence of Death in our ſelves*, and been in the utmoſt Extremity of Danger, and yet have eſcaped, as it were by Miracles? *It was God that delivered us.* Have we been nigh unto Death, upon the Brink of the Grave, and the Borders of Eternity? And are we brougt back again? It was *the Lord that had mercy on us*, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks in the Caſe of *Epaphroditus*. Good King *Hezekiah* he was under a Sentence of Death. The Prophet *Iſaiah* came to him, and ſaid, *Thus ſaith the Lord, ſet thine Houſe in order, for thou ſhalt die, and not live*, i. e. thy Diſeaſe is mortal in its own Nature, in an ordinary way thou canſt not live, thou haſt no reaſon to expect or look for any thing but Death; yet the Lord had mercy on *Hezekiah*, and miraculouſly reſtored him. *The Word of the Lord came to* Iſaiah, *ſaying, Turn again, and tell* Hezekiah, *I have heard thy Prayer, I have ſeen thy tears, behold, I will heal thee.* God was *Hezekiah*'s Healer; when other Phyſicians could do nothing he wrought the Cure by a Word, by an act of his powerful Will; and the good Man after his recovery makes his thankful acknowledgments to God, as the Author of it, and aſcribes the praiſe and glory unto him. *Thou* O Lord, *haſt in love to my Soul delivered it from the pit of corruption*, &c. *The Grave cannot praiſe thee, death cannot celebrate thee*, &c. *The living, the living, he ſhall praiſe thee, as I do this day. The Lord was ready to ſave me, therefore we will ſing my ſongs to the ſtringed inſtruments*, &c. Hear alſo how *David* breaks out into the praiſes of God, as his Healer, ſtirring up all the Powers and Faculties of his Soul to join in this holy Work. *Bleſs the Lord, O my Soul, and all that is within me bleſs his holy Name. Bleſs the Lord, O my Soul, and forget not all his benefits. Who forgiveth all thine iniquities, who healeth all thy diſeaſes: Who redeemeth thy life from deſtruction: who crowneth thee with*

2 *Cor.* 1. 8, 9, 10.

Phil. 2. 26, 27.

2 *Kings* 20. 1.

Verſ. 4, 5.

Iſa. 38. 17, 18, 19, 20.

Pſal. 103. 1, 2, 3, 4.

with loving kindneſs, and tender mercies. In another *Pſalm*
Pſal. 118. 14, 17, 18, 21. he expreſſeth himſelf thus, *The Lord is my ſtrength, and ſong, and is become my Salvation. I ſhall not die but live, and declare the works of the Lord. The Lord hath chaſtened me ſore, but he hath not given me over unto death. I will praiſe thee, for thou haſt heard me, and art become my Salvation.* That's the firſt thing, God is to be praiſed for our Deliverances from dangerous Afflictions, becauſe he is the Author of them, and a great deal of his Power, and Wiſdom, and Goodneſs is ſeen in ſuch Deliverances, in rebuking the ſoreſt Diſtempers, and unexpectedly raiſing a poor Sick dying Creature to Life and Health again.

Reaſon 2d. (2.) As God is the Author of our Deliverances, upon which Account Praiſe is due to him, *ſo God doth require and expect a return of praiſe from his People, when they have received delivering mercy from his gracious hands.*
Pſal. 50. 15. *Call upon me* (ſays God) *in the day of trouble, I will deliver thee, and thou ſhalt glorify me*; viz. by praiſing me for thy Deliverance, and by Obedience to my Commands. Hereby we glorify God, as himſelf in a way
Ver. 23. of infinite Condeſcenſion ſpeaks, *ver.* 23. *whoſo offereth praiſe glorifieth me, and to him that ordereth his converſation aright, will I ſhew the Salvation of God.* When God has delivered us, he looks for Praiſe, and expects that we ſhould offer *the Sacrifice of Thankſgiving*, wherewith he is pleaſed to account himſelf Glorified by us; yea he requires and commands us to Praiſe him. Praiſe is a commanded Duty as well as Prayer, and we Sin in the neglect of the one, as well as of the other. I might quote a great many Scriptures wherein this Duty of Thankſgiving for Mercies received is enjoyned upon us.
Phil. 4 6. *Be careful for nothing* (ſays the *Apoſtle*) *but in every thing, by prayer and ſupplication with thankſgiving, let*
Eph. 5. 20 *your requeſt be made known to God. Give thanks always, for all things unto God and the Father in the Name of our Lord*

Jeſus

Jeſus Chriſt, ſays the ſame *Apoſtle* to the *Epheſians*. He bids the *Theſſalonians* to *give thanks in every thing*, i. e. for every Mercy; and to excite them hereunto, he aſſures them, that *this was the will of God in Chriſt Jeſus concerning them*. So he exhorts the *Hebrews*, that *by Chriſt they ſhould offer the Sacrifice of praiſe to God continually, giving thanks unto his Name*. Many other *Scriptures* I might produce to the ſame purpoſe if there were need of it, but theſe may ſuffice. You ſee now that Praiſe and Thankſgiving is a commanded Duty, 'tis neceſſary *neceſſitate præcepti*; if we neglect it we are guilty of manifeſt and inexcuſable Diſobedience to the Will of the Supreme *Lawgiver*, and we do, ſo far as in us lies, fruſtrate God's Expectation, who juſtly looks for a *return of praiſe*, where there has been a *receit of mercy*. That's the 2*d*. Reaſon of the Point. 1 Theſſ. 5. 18. Heb. 13. 15.

(3.) As the Command of God binds us to Thankfulneſs and Praiſe, *ſo natural Reaſon and Equity, and much more ſpiritual Gratitude and Ingenuity oblige us to it*. Reaſon its ſelf tells us, that we ſhould be thankful to our Benefactors, and that a Favour is but loſt and caſt away upon an ungrateful Perſon. 'Tis vile and baſe, ſordid and diſingenuous in a very high Degree, to ſlight the Kindneſs of our Friends, which we do when we are not thankful for Benefits received. *Ingratum ſi dixeris, omne malum dixeris*, was the ſaying of an *Heathen*. Call a Man ungrateful, and you call him all that's Evil. 'Tis a great Evil, and a Mark of a diſgenerous Spirit to be unthankful to earthly Friends and Benefactors, who have laid Obligations upon us by their Favours, and Kindneſſes to us; now if Unthankfulneſs to Man be ſo bad, what then is Ingratitude to God, our greateſt and beſt Friend, who is always doing of us Good, *who loads us daily with his benefits*, who ſupports us under our Burdens, ſupplies our Wants, relieves us in our Diſtreſſes, remembers us in our low Eſtate, hearkens to our Sighs and *Reaſon 3d.* *Ingrato quod donatur, deperditur. Sen.* Pſal. 68. 19.

and Groans, pities us in our Afflictions, comforts us in our Sorrows, delivers us from our Fears, brings us up from the Gates of the Grave, and keeps us from going down into the Pit. Surely, if we have any Spiritual Ingenuity in us we cannot but praiſe, and admire, and love, and ſerve the God of our Mercies, *the life of our Lives, and the length of our Days.* But then eſpecially does Spiritual Gratitude and Ingenuity oblige us to this Duty of Thankſgiving, when the Mercy which we have to Praiſe God for, is in an eminent manner an *Anſwer of Prayer.* Was the Lord ſo *gracious* as to hear and anſwer Prayer, and ſhall we be ſo *ungrateful* as not to return Praiſe? Μὴ γένοιτο, *God forbid.* If God has *favoured* us with an Anſwer of our Prayers, ſure there is all the Reaſon in the World that we ſhould *honour* him with our Praiſes, and proclaim his Power and Mercy: How oft does *David* praiſe God for anſwering his Prayers? *In my diſtreſs* (ſays he) *I called upon the Lord, and cried unto my God; he heard my Voice out of his Temple, and my cry came before him, even into his Ears:* And for this he praiſeth God in the Cloſe of the *Pſam. The Lord liveth, and bleſſed be my Rock; and let the God of my Salvation be exalted. He delivereth me from mine Enemies,* &c. *Therefore will I give thanks unto thee, O Lord, and ſing praiſes unto thy Name.* The Deliverance for which *David* praiſeth God in the Pſalm where my Text lies, came as a return of Prayer, as is evident from *ver.* 2. and *ver.* 8, 9, 10. and then he breaks forth into Praiſe, *ver.* 11, 12. It were endleſs to mention all the Places that are of this Strain and Tendency; from thoſe that have been mentioned you may plainly ſee that Spiritual Ingenuity has put the Saints and People of God upon this Duty of Thankſgiving, and why ſhould it not excite and ſtir up us alſo to the chearful, vigorous Performance of ſo great and ſo ſweet a Duty? Oh let us not be guilty of ſo foul a Crime as Ingratitude to God for his Mercies towards us,

Deut. 30. 20.

Pſal. 18 6.

Verſ. 46.

Verſ. 48.

Verſ. 49.

us, poor undeſerving, illdeſerving Creatures, becauſe wretched Sinners This laſt Conſideration, that we have not in the leaſt deſerved the Favours we have received, ſhould, methinks, work mightily upon our Ingenuity (if there be ſuch a thing, to be found in us) and provoke us unto returns of Praiſe: We have been ſo far from Meriting, that we have indeed made a Forfeiture of all our Good Things, and it were a Righteous Thing with God to give our Bodies for a Prey to the Worms of the Earth, and to bury our Souls in the depths of Hell. Oh then! what Monſters of Ingratitude ſhall we be, and how juſtly ſhall we be condemned even by natural Reaſon and Conſcience, if we neglect to give Thanks unto God for ſparing, preventing, and delivering Mercy? Shall not we, *who are leſs then the leaſt of all the Lord's Mercies*, give him the greateſt Praiſes that poſſibly we can, for his manifold Favours and Kindneſſes towards us, whoſe Souls he has many a time brought up from the Grave, and has kept us alive that we ſhould not go down to the Pit? Gen. 32. 10.

(4) *It is one main end and deſign of God in affording Mercies, and granting Deliverances to his People, that they ſhould praiſe him for the ſame.* This is plain from the Words of the Pſalmiſt in the cloſe of this Pſalm, where my Text lies. Thou haſt turned for me my Mourning into Dancing, *&c. To the End that my Glory may ſing Praiſe to thee and not be ſilent.* q.d. This was thy deſign, O Lord, in ſhewing Mercy to me, that my *Tongue*, and my *Soul*, my Heart, and Lips, and Life might praiſe thee for the ſame. *In hunc finem ex variis periculis Manu Dei liberamur, ut juſtum gratitudinis Officium Deo rependamus*, ſays *Mollerus*, upon the place. For this end are we delivered by the Hand of God out of various Dangers, that we may repay or return the juſt Debt or Duty, of Gratitude unto God. That's a Fourth Reaſon. If we do not render Thanks for Benefits received, we Reaſon 4th.

anſwer not God's End, in the beſtowing of them, but we do wretchedly Abuſe and Pervert them, by which Means they will become fearful Aggravations of our Condemnation.

Reaſon 5th. (5) And Laſtly, For the Reaſons of the Point. *The Tribute or Revenue of Praiſe and Thankſgiving, is all that we can pay to God for the many Merciesand Deliverances we have received.* Surely then we ſhould by no Means neglect this. Indeed our Praiſes are but a poor Return to God for his Benefits, and muſt not be look'd upon as a Recompence to him; for truly the ſmalleſt of all his Mercies, is more worth then all our Praiſes, and his holy *Name is exalted above all Bleſſing and Praiſe.* 'Tis a part of his Praiſe, to be above all our Praiſes; but ſeeing his Condeſcenſion is ſuch, that he is pleaſed graciouſly to accept through Chriſt thoſe poor Offerings and Sacrifices of Thankſgiving, which he alſo enables us by his Grace and Spirit to preſent unto him, ſurely we ſhould be highly to blame indeed, if we ſhould neglect to make the utmoſt thankful Acknowledgments to God for his great Mercies which we are any way capable of. Is this all we can return, and ſhall we grudge this to our great and conſtant Benefactor? If we neglect this Duty of Thankſgiving, God may ſay of us as *David* did concerning *Nabal*, that ungrateful Churl, *Surely in vain have I kept all that this Fellow hath in the Wilderneſs.* So God may ſay. In vain have I beſtowed ſo many Mercies upon theſe diſingenuous Wretches, that will not ſo much as Thank me for them. Let not us be guilty of ſuch baſe Ingratitude, but let us ſay with *David*; *What ſhall I render unto the Lord, for all his Benefits towards me? I will take the Cup of Salvation*; or, *I will offer to thee the Sacrifice of Thankſgiving.* Thus much for the Reaſon of the Third Point, which may alſo ſerve as Motives to excite us unto the Performance of this Duty of Praiſe and Thankfulneſs.

Neh. 9. 5.

1 Sam. 25. 21.

Pſal. 116 12, 13.

Verſ. 17.

I

I will ſay thus much by way of Inference. Is it ſo great a Duty as you have heard, to give Thanks and Praiſes to God for temporal Mercies and Deliverances? How much more then ſhould we extol and magnify his Name for *Spiritual Bleſſings*, for eternal Election, for effectual Vocation, for free Juſtification by the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt apprehended by Faith, and imputed to us for the pardon of Sin, for the Communication of the Spirit, and Sanctification thereby, for the precious Promiſes of the Goſpel, for the Means of Grace, and for the Hopes of Glory? The Apoſtle praiſeth God in a lofty Manner for theſe and ſuch like Spiritual Bleſſings. *Bleſſed be the God and Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who hath Bleſſed us with all ſpiritual Bleſſings*, &c. divers of which he enumerates in the following Verſes. Oh, How ſhould we praiſe God for Chriſt, and the Benefits that he hath purchaſed by his precious Blood! We have reaſon to ſay, *Bleſſed be God for Jeſus Chriſt. Thanks be to God for his unſpeakable Gift.* *Uſe.* Eph. 1. 3, 4, 5, 6, 7. See alſo 1 Pet. 1. 3, 4, 5.

There is one *Obſervation* more which reſults from the latter part of the Text, that I would ſpeak a little to before I conclude, and it is this,

(4) *That when we have received great and eminent deliverances, from Death-threatning Dangers, we ſhould not content our ſelves with our own private Praiſes and Thankſgivings to God, but we ſhould call upon others to joyn with us in this bleſſed heavenly Work.* So does *David* here, after he had ſaid, [*O Lord, thou haſt brought up my Soul from the Grave, thou haſt kept me alive that I ſhould not go down to the Pit*] he preſently adds [*Sing unto the Lord, O ye Saints of his*, &c.] As we ſhould joyn together in praying to God, becauſe, *Vis unita fortior*, united Force is the ſtronger, ſo we ſhould joyn together in praiſing God, for this is very pleaſing to him, and very profitable to our ſelves. The mutual, joynt, united praiſes of the Saints are ſweet Muſick, pleaſant and delight- *Diſt. 4th.*

ful Melody in the Ears of the Almighty, and then (ordinarily) are our own Hearts more warmed and enlarged, and our Affections more raiſed and elevated, when we joyn in Conſort to Sing and Celebrate his Praiſes. 'Tis pleaſing to God, and ſhould be pleaſant to us, to Mingle (as I may ſay) our Praiſes together: With what raviſhing Delight ſhould we come into the *Houſe of God, with the Voice of Joy and Praiſe, and with a Multitude that keep Holy-day?* This mutual praiſing God is (as one ſays) a reſemblance of Heaven, in doing this we are beginning that bleſſed Work which we hope to be imployed in forever. What's the Work of the innumerable company of Angels, and of the Spirits of the juſt made perfect that are before the Throne, but to ſing Allelujas unto *him that ſits upon the Throne, and to the Lamb for ever?* O how would it tranſport us, could we hear but the *Eccho* of thoſe triumphant Songs, wherewith the Palace of the grat *King* does continually reſound! It is to this pleaſant and chearful Country that we hope at length to come, thither our dear departed Chriſtian Friends and Relations are gone before us, there they are waiting for us, and expecting our Arrival; Let us then accuſtom our ſelves at preſent to their happy Employment, let us begin the Work of Heaven, upon Earth, and raiſe our Voices as high as we can in the Praiſes of our God, and then conſidering how unſuitable our higheſt Elevations are to his moſt excellent and glorious Majeſty, let us long to joyn with the glorified Spirits in their louder and ſweeter Hymns. Surely my Friends, we are much to blame that we are not more taken up in the joynt Praiſes of God. I am ſure we have abundant cauſe to keep Days of *praiſe*, as well as Days of *Prayer* together, and indeed Days of *Prayer*, make way for Days of *Praiſe*, and Days of *Thankſgiving* do very fitly ſucceed to Days of *Humiliation* and *Supplication*. When God has heard our joynt Prayers, and gra-

Pſal. 42. 4.

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graciouſly anſwered them, 'tis moſt Equal and Congruous that he ſhould have our joynt united Praiſes. We ought to be as loud in our Praiſes as we are in our Groans; 'tis very decent, comely, and agreeable to Reaſon that it ſhould be ſo. *Rejoyce in the Lord, O ye Righteous* (ſays the Pſalmiſt) *Praiſe is comely for the upright. Praiſe ye the Lord, for it is good to ſing Praiſes unto our God, for it is pleaſant, and Praiſe is comely.* Mutual Praiſe, when the Saints and People of God joyn together in this Work is very comely; and yet alaſs how much is this Duty neglected? And it may be as a Sign of this Neglect (as One obſerves) that ſo many deſire *Funeral* Sermons to be preached for their departed Friends, and ſo few deſire any Sermons of *Thankſgiving* for their own recovery from dangerous Diſeaſes, or for their Friends upon the like Occaſion. 'Tis ſtrange that we ſhould be more ready to Mourn then to rejoyce, and that our Sorrows ſhould be more Paſſionate and Fluent then our Joys. We meet and mingle our Tears together when our Friends are to be Repoſed in a Bed of Duſt, and why ſhould we not as ſolemnly meet when any of our Friends have been nigh unto Death, and yet eſcaped from it, that we may mingle our Joys together, and return our common Thanks and Praiſes unto God for ſo great a Mercy?

Pſal. 33. 1.

Pal. 147. 1.

Mr. Rogers.

What I have ſpoken in the general is eaſily applicable to my own particular Caſe. I have been (as you know) upon the very brink of the Grave, and the Lord hath wrought a very great Deliverance for me, ſo that my dangerous Sickneſs hath not been unto Death. My Recovery is even like a Reſurrection, ſo unlikely, ſo unexpected was it; and there are ſeveral in the preſence of God who expreſt their Kindneſs to me by praying both apart and together for me, in the Hour of my Extremity (unto whom I owe and render moſt hearty Thanks upon this account) Come now (my beloved Brethren) ye that wept, and prayed and cried to God for me, and my deareſt Relative (whom the Lord has alſo raiſed

raiſed up in anſwer to Prayer) come, and let us now rejoyce together, let us exalt and praiſe the Name of our God together; let our Minds be filled with the moſt admiring Thoughts of him, let our Hearts burn with the moſt pure and ardent Flames of Love to him, let us joyn both Heart and Voice to give him a common Song of Praiſe. Help and Aſſiſt me, I beſeech you, with your *Praiſes*, as you have done with your *Prayers*. As I was helped by the Prayers of many, ſo I deſire that *thanks may be given by many on my behalf*. You that ſhewed ſo much Kindneſs and Compaſſion in praying for me, give God the Glory of that late wonderful Deliverance which in Anſwer to your Requeſts he hath given me, and of that Experience touching the Power and Succeſs of fervent Prayer, which he hath herein given you.

2 Cor. 1. 11.

Concluſion. For a Cloſe of my Diſcourſe I will leave but theſe two Words of Exhortation with you. (1.) Bleſs God for the continuance of Life and Health; but yet (2.) prepare deligently alſo for Sickneſs and Death.

1ſt. (1.) *Bleſs God for the continuance of life and health.* *It is he that holdeth our Souls in life. In him we live and move and have our beings.* It is he that delivers us from many deadly Dangers, and keeps the Lamp of Life from being Extinguiſhed, tho' 'tis but like a Taper carried in the open Air, and expoſed to the ſtormy Winds which are ready to blow it out every Moment. *In God's hand our breath is. He is our life, and the length of our days*; and when he ſhall pleaſe to with-hold our Breath, then we muſt die, and return to our Duſt. The Preſervation of Life and Health is a continual Miracle, as well as recovery from Sickneſs. When we conſider of how many Parts the admirable Frame of the Human Body does conſiſt, how many Muſcles and Sinews, Fibres and Membranes, Bones and Griſtles, Nerves and Vains, and Arteries go to the Compoſition of this little Structure or *Microcoſm*, the leaſt of which being diſordered

Pſal. 66. 8, 9. Act. 17. 28. Dan. 5. 23. Deut. 30. 20.

dered breeds a great deal of Trouble to the whole Body, how wonderful may it juſtly appear to us that we ſhould ever be in Health? Oh! What a mighty, wiſe, and powerful Providence is it that preſerves us for many Months and Years together from Diſeaſes and Death! That we are not ſcorcht with *burning Fevers*, that we are not waſted with *pining Conſumptions*, that we are not unmanned with *raving Frenzies*, that we are not torn, rackt and tortured with *Stone*, *Gout*, *Convulſions*, and the like, that we are not ſuddenly ſtruck Dead with *Mortal Apoplexies* which Kill without any warning, and that our *Limbs* and *Bones* are not broken by a thouſand Accidents. Oh, what Cauſe have we to be thankful to God for theſe things, for 'tis unto his Providence that we are continually beholden for our Preſervation. But then

(2.) *Let us diligently prepare for Sickneſs and Death, which will come ſooner or later.* Tho' we have eſcaped many eminent Dangers, yet the time haſtens when we muſt yield to the mortal Stroke. We may all ſay after *Job*, with the greateſt aſſurance, *I know that thou wilt bring me to death, and to the houſe appointed for all living.* This is the Statute Law of Heaven. *It is appointed unto men once to die. Duſt we are, and unto duſt* we muſt and *ſhall return.* We have been oft ſhaken *over* the Grave, and ere long we ſhall be ſhaken *in*. *The Graves are ready for us*, Oh, let us get ready for them. We are Mortal Creatures, and muſt *ſhortly put off theſe our Tabernacles.* Moſt true is that of *Job*, *Man that is born of a woman, is of few days, and full of trouble. He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down, he fleeth alſo as a ſhadow, and continueth not.* And that of the *Pſalmiſt*. *As for man his days are as graſs: as a flower of the field ſo he flouriſheth. For the wind paſſeth over it and it is gone*; and the place *thereof ſhall know it no more.* Let us not *put the evil day far from us.* Diſeaſes and Death are never the further off,

Job 30. 23.
Heb. 9. 27.
Gen. 3. 19.
Job 17. 1.
2 Peter 1. 14.
Job 14. 1, 2.
Pſal. 103. 15, 16.
Amos 6. 3.

off, for our not thinking of them: And let me tell you (Sirs) Diſeaſes and Death ſeem other things at a diſtance then they do at hand. Perſons are apt to have ſlight Thoughts of them, when they imagin themſelves ſecure from them; but when they come to ſeize upon you in good earneſt, when *Fleſh* and *Heart* come to *faint* and *fail*, when *Friends* and *Relations* ſtand Mourning over you, as over dying Perſons, ready to take their laſt Farewel; when Death preſents it's ſelf before your Eyes, and you expect nothing but to appear immediately before the high and everlaſting *Judge* (as he that ſpeaks to you lately did) Oh, what awful Apprehenſions will you then have of your great Change! And what a Terror will it be to you, if you find your ſelves unprepared for it! 'Tis ſad indeed when a poor wretched Creature is ſo Sick that he cannot live, and yet withal ſo Sinful that he dares not die, knows not how to bare the Thoughts of his Appearance before the *Tribunal* of Jeſus Chriſt; when the Soul ſits quivering upon the dying Lips, expecting with horror the dreadful Sentence of Condemnation, preſently after its ſeparation from the Body. O let us, provide in time for that which we cannot avoid, I mean Death. Tho' we have eſcaped many Perils and Dangers, yet we muſt die at laſt. The ſame *David* who ſays in my Text. [Lord, thou haſt brought up my Soul from the Grave,] did himſelf afterwards ſubmit to Death, *and ſaw corruption*. And as he did, ſo muſt we, our Bodies muſt die and become Meat for Worms, and turn to Corruption and Putrefaction. Oh, let us be careful in time to ſecure the everlaſting Welfare of our immortal Souls, *by getting an intereſt in Jeſus Chriſt, by faith, repentance,* and *ſincere obedience*; So ſhall Death be no Terror to us, but we ſhall have cauſe to Triumph over it in the noble Language of the Apoſtle. *O death, where is thy ſting? O grave, where is thy victory? Thanks be to God who hath given us the victory,*

Act. 2 29. & *Act.* 13. 36.

1 *Cor.* 15. 55, 57.

ctory, through our Lord Jesus Christ. The *last Enemy* will be (in a Sense) a *Friend.* *Death* shall be to us a Passage to an endless *Life*, to a State of perfect Holiness and Happiness in the Vision and Fruition of God; *In whose presence there is fulness of joy, and at whose right hand are pleasures for evermore.* Psal. 16. 11.

An

FINIS.

An Hymn Sung after Sermon, suited to the *Occasion.*

O Ever blessed be the Lord
Let my whole heart now say,
Who pitied me when on the Bed
Of languishing I lay.

Before my Eyes death ready stood
The mortal Stroke to give,
But God stood by, and to me said,
Thou shalt not die, but live.

What shall I render to the Lord?
What thanks? what praises sing?
O let me now a grateful Soul
Before his Altar bring;

And offer this in Flames of Love
To that most gracious God,
Who heard our Cries, and in due time
Remov'd his threatning Rod.

Let us proclaim with joyful hearts
The wonders of his Love,
'Twill be our holy happy work,
In the blest World above.

Let us this Heavenly work begin
While we are yet below,
Let Heart & Lips & Life him praise
To whom our All we owe.

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